



Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden, Inc. Newsletter April 2010

No.4



Photo John Bentley ©2010

Photo: Eucalyptus Arboretum Melton Botanic Garden

What's on in April

8th Thursday 10-noon Grow the Garden
Ryans Creek - Melton Botanic Garden

11th Sunday 10am-noon Clean Up Day & Waterwatch

Melton Botanic Garden meet at rotundas

14th Wednesday 7.30pm Meeting:

Guest Speaker - Alex Smart: Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens & Conference in May at Mildura

15th Thursday 10am Propagation

Contact Margaret Peters 5367 3328

***18th Sunday 10-noon Grow the Garden**

Ryans Creek - Melton Botanic Garden PLUS Free sausage at noon and walk around at 12.30pm.

*Not usual 4th Sunday due to 25th April - Anzac Day

What's on in May

12th Wednesday 7.30pm Meeting:

Cathy Powers - Western Australia Trip

13th Thurs & *30th Sunday 10-noon Grow the Garden *Not usual 4th Sunday due to AFBG Conference
Ryans Creek - Melton Botanic Garden

22nd – 24th May Association of Friends Botanic Gardens (AFBG) - Conference in Mildura

30th Sunday Bunnings Sausage Sizzle

Contact Jill Bentley 9743 3819

FMBG Monthly Meeting Venue

Monthly meetings are usually held at the DJ Cunningham Centre in Exford Rd, Melton South (Melways 342 K3) at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday night of each month.

There is parking, easy access, good meeting space, kitchen and toilets.

Website of the Month - Grandpa's tools

Great Aussie made garden hoes from a family business. Some members have been using them for weeding in the Melton Botanic Garden.

See: www.grandpasgardentools.com.au

FMBG were given a tool sharpener for a raffle prize from the owner at their stand at the Melbourne International Garden & Flower Show.

April FMBG Meeting 14th Wednesday 7.30pm Alex Smart

President, Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens



The role of AFBG and the Conference in May at Mildura

DJ Cunningham Centre, Exford Rd, Melton South,
Melways 342 K3

For information contact Jill Bentley: 9743 3819

Vacant Executive Position

The changes in our amended constitution have resulted in a vacant ordinary member executive position. Please let us know if you are interested in joining the Executive Committee for term until August 2010 – a good opportunity for a try out before considering a longer term commitment.

Executive Committee

Next Executive Committee Meeting Tuesday 27th April at 7.30pm – meeting at Bentley's place.

Propagating for FMBG Plant Sales

We have plant sales throughout the year.

The next Propagation Day is Thursday 15th April. In the meantime you can continue to propagate plants at your own place. Alan Partridge propagated a good range of Australian natives which were on sale at the Houdini Festival.

If you wish to assist with propagation and growing some plants please contact Margaret Peters on 5367 3328

FMBG logo badges – keep wearing yours to meetings, in public etc – we are being noticed!

Eucalyptus Arboretum Working Party

The Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden (FMBG) are looking at the development of the Melton Botanic Garden and which parts of the plan can be implemented.

We wish to start at some stage this year on building the Eucalyptus Arboretum.

To see this goal through, we have established this project as a partnership between the Australian Plants Society Melton & Bacchus Marsh Group, Melton Shire Council, and FMBG.

The working group (or project team) will look at feasibility, costs, funding, plans, production and acquisition of plants, landscaping, weed control, project timelines, etc. David Pye is the project leader. David is involved in both groups and it is most fitting that he takes on this role given his prior experience in project management and his horticultural knowledge.

We believe that the Eucalyptus Arboretum is a suitable project in the Melton Botanic Garden that can be largely undertaken by volunteers given funding for the landscaping, plants etc.

We should seek funding such as carbon offsets from VicRoads and other bodies such as Western water. It is important to start this project soon as we need to begin to source plants and get some of the large numbers into propagation as it could be 2 years before some are suitable to plant out.

The project requires several thousand plants including not only 550 Eucalypts but 20,000 understorey shrubs, grasses and ground covers such as Eremophilas, Acacias, Grevillias, etc.

The first meeting to establish the working party was held on Friday 26th March. Three subgroups have been formed: *Funding, Site Preparation and Weed Control and, Plants.*

Don't worry if you missed the meeting but still want to be involved in the planning and/or a subgroup, please get in touch with David (5428 9369 / dabpye@gmail.com), or John Bentley (9743 3819 / president@fmbg.org.au).

Clean-Up Australia Day

On Sunday 7th March fifteen FMBG members braved the muddy conditions to help clean up the Melton Botanic Garden. We had a good turn out considering devastation caused by the hail and rainstorm the day before and it also being a long weekend. We had about 12 bags of rubbish plus a couch and two armchairs which were wet and heavy.

Thanks to Janet Dyke for co-ordinating the event for FMBG and to Linda Bradburn from MSC for co-ordinating the event across the Shire of Melton.

FMBG Library

Jean Partridge has kindly taken on the role of FMBG Librarian and organising the collection. We have books, DVDs and magazines in the library. The library is on display at the regular monthly meetings.

Search for a Patron

On the Planning Day in January we identified finding a patron for the Melton Botanic Garden as a key activity.

FMBG is calling for suggestions. We have not determined any criteria so keep your mind open and thinking caps on then send us a name(s) together with a reason why they would be suitable.

Suggestions to: friends@fmbg.org.au
or John @ 9743 3819

FMBG Field Trip – Sunday 14th March

Our visit to the Ballarat Botanic Garden and Lambley Nursery by a small group in the Melton Community Bus and a car was a most enjoyable and interesting day. On arrival at Ballarat we were met by our guides Joan and John Garner of the Friends of Ballarat Botanic Garden.

After an update on things happening in the Botanic Garden a leisurely walk around to look at the various beds and heritage listed trees was made in pleasant sunny weather. Generally the gardens were in better condition than at our last visit in October 2008.



FMBG members with Friends of Ballarat BG hosts

John Garner was able to give us a lot of interesting information on the famous avenue of Redwood trees that stretch the length of the garden. Most of these have been in decline due to age and drought in recent times, some having been removed. With recycled water now

available in the garden and other measures undertaken, these trees have been stabilized. Their future is a challenge with maintenance and replacement very costly.

Particularly interesting was a label engraving machine used by the Friends to make the name plates for trees and other plantings in the Botanic Garden. Contacts for more information on this were obtained.

We left Ballarat Botanic Garden after a picnic lunch and travelled to the Lambley Nursery at Ascot between Ballarat and Clunes in a rural setting. This is a very specialized enterprise with a wide range of unusual and older garden plants including perennials and herbs.



FMBG members with Marcus at Lambley Nursery

Our guide here at Lambley was Marcus Ryan who gave us a very interesting and informative tour around the various parts. A hedge enclosed area had a garden consisting of a large range of Mediterranean plants from small herbs to olive trees. This garden only gets a supplementary watering three or four times a year, depending on rainfall most of the time.

An interesting feature was that the majority of propagation at Lambley is from cuttings taken from a large stock of "mother" plants growing in a very open area exposed to full sunlight. This area was a colourful spectacle of various flowers and leaf forms.



Dry garden at Lambley Nursery

Marcus said that all plants raised at Lambley are very hardy to frost as the area experiences

frequent severe winter frosts similar to Canberra.

After our tour with Marcus we enjoyed an afternoon tea in a lovely small garden area under some shady trees before the return trip home to Melton after a very interesting day.

Alan Partridge

Grow the Garden Days

We held two grow the garden days in March. FMBG volunteers hand weeded resulting in weeds being removed by the bagful from Ryans Creek and surrounds. Well done everyone.



*Friends with a ute load of bagged up weeds
(Photo: L.Nardella)*

We always have on hand a syringe receptacle and at the last Grow the Garden Day we found two syringes. Call the site co-ordinator if you find a syringe – don't pick it up yourself.

Thanks to Lyn Nardella for taking the photographs.



Syringes (Photo: L.Nardella)



Jean, Allan, and Alan with some bags of weeds

Support FMBG and help create Sustainable suburbs in the West



Do you want to save money on bills and be more sustainable at home but don't know where to start?

Climate change is now an issue that affects everyone. Sustainable Suburbs is a home improvement program run by councils in the Western Region of Melbourne to help you save money on bills by improving the environmental performance of your home.

This council program offers participants:

- FREE home assessment - water, waste and energy
- FREE information sessions
- FREE light globe and showerhead exchange
- DISCOUNTS on a large variety of quality products and services
- REBATES from state and federal governments
- RELIABLE information that is easy to understand

As a **special offer** for Friends of the Melton Botanic Gardens, Envirogroup will donate \$10 for each member who signs up for the free home assessment.

All you have to do is register for your FREE home assessment and select Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens in the "How you heard" field.

Register online at:

www.envirogroup.com.au/sustainablesuburbs

OR call 1300 206 113 and mention "Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens".



Attila Kaptiany's Open Garden April 10-12

See Attila's Cacti & Succulent Garden
1 The Lough Crt, Narre Warren North, Mel.109:A10

Attila is also speaking at the Melton and Bacchus Marsh Australian Plants Society Meeting on 28th April about WA Wildflowers - A different perspective

Grants

Vision for Werribee Plains (V4WP)

Our major activity remaining for the V4WP grant to the end of May is for hand weeding by FMBG volunteers, some planting and to finalise the remaining contractor weeding and spraying.

Information about the grant can be found on the FMBG website.

Allan Benson and John Bentley had an onsite meeting with Brett Whitfield (DSE – V4WP) and Tony Herwerth (MSC) late March. This lengthy inspection of what had been done on the project and the questions from Brett replaced the need for a quarterly report for V4WP.



John Bentley, Brett Whitfield, Tony Herwerth, Allan Benson

Melbourne Water

Great news – we received our full grant application for 2010 of \$21,989.77 inc. GST. Plus we received smaller grants of \$330 inc. GST to support administration, production and mailing of newsletters four times per year to members who do receive a newsletter by email and \$550 inc. GST for brochure production.

The large grant is for the continuing work we have been doing on Ryans Creek. This grant covers funding for professional weed removal and site preparation, plant purchases, hand weeding tools and Community Volunteers Australia. FMBG's in-kind matching contribution is for exotic weed removal by hand, volunteer planting, weeding and watering.

FMBG Social Dinner 29th March

We had a great turn out for the dinner with twenty-one members attending. Good conversation. Thanks to Lynette Rehling for organising the dinner. She was also seen going home with a brand new power saw.

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference 2010 May 21st-23rd

The conference is hosted by Friends of Inland Botanic Gardens Mildura and supported by the Shire of Wentworth Council and the Mildura Rural City Council.

The conference theme is Secrets of the Mallee. FMBG are giving a presentation at the conference. A number of FMBG members are attending and have registered.

The program includes short presentations of interesting and innovative developments in various gardens.

Speakers will include Dr Gary Crilley, Senior Lecturer, Division of Business, School of Management, University of SA. Gary is responsible for the research on the benefits for the "over 50's" of volunteering in botanic gardens.

Brief Outline of Program:

Fri.21st May Pre -conference tour in local area (if numbers sufficient)

6.00pm Civic Reception, Alfred Deakin Centre

Sat.22nd May 8.30am Saturday Registration, morning sessions, afternoon discussions and AIB Gardens tours

Sun.23rd May 8.15 Breakfast at AIB Gardens, Early birds walk, sessions, AGM, Optional afternoon river trip

Mon.24th May Post Conference tour to places of environmental interest along the Murray River

Registration forms and details are available on the website.

See: www.friendsbotanicgardens.org/events.htm

If you are interested in attending please let us know. Some members have already booked accommodation at various locations in Mildura.

We have printed information and registration forms if anyone would like to consider attending.

Cost per person is \$120. Extras per person include conference dinner \$48, breakfast in the gardens \$12, Sunday afternoon river cruise \$25, pre-conference tour \$100 and a post-conference tour \$25.

Alex Smart President of the Association of Friends of Botanic Garden will speak at our April 2010 meeting.

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show

We had four members volunteer to assist on the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria stand at the show.



FMBG display and hanging basket

We received many questions about the Melton Botanic Garden and people also saw the FMBG hanging basket in the RHSV Hanging Basket Competition. Well done RHSV on getting 222 hanging baskets and making a world record (yet to be confirmed). The FMBG hanging basket contained three types of eremophias, which flowered well before the show, but did not produce a flower during the show. Of course it is now flowering again. We put in three gnomes to give some added interest to the basket. Feedback from the people looking after the hanging display section said the kids liked the gnomes. Many thanks to Barb and David Pye of Suntuff Natives who are also FMBG members for donating the plants for the basket.

Houdini Festival – Diggers Rest

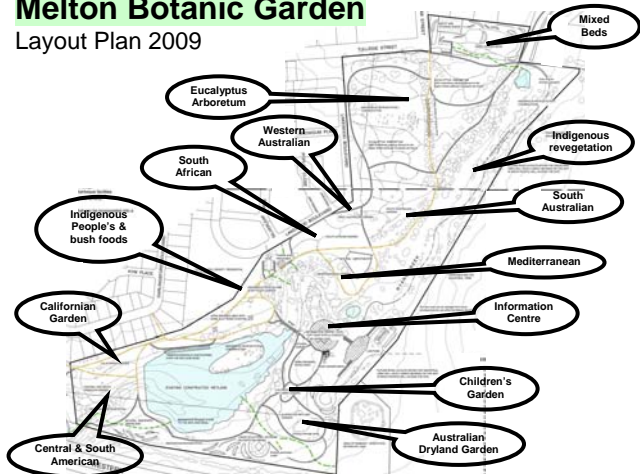


Allan, Bev and Jill at the FMBG marquee

Thanks to everyone who helped make this a success by helping with organisation (Jill and Margaret), propagation (Margaret & others), setting up (David Peters), and being on the stand (Margaret, Dave, Allan, Bev, Jill and John). We had good plant sales and made contact with many visitors.

Melton Botanic Garden

Layout Plan 2009



Membership

Renewals are due by July 1st – Have you renewed?

Please encourage some new memberships from your friends and family. **We have just tipped over 140 members for 2009-2010.**

Single-\$10, Single concession or student-\$5,
Household/Concession-\$20/\$10, Associate-\$20,
Corporate-\$50

New memberships are approved each month at the Executive meeting.

Please call Jill 9743 3819 for information or to drop in a payment. If you are housebound we can arrange to collect your payment and form.

2010 Calendar

Our major speaker for 2010 is **John Patrick** from ABC Gardening Australia. He will be with us in September. Another great speaker is **John Arnott** Director of the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens Cranbourne in Melbourne. We have also managed to secure **Richard Allen** to speak in October about his new book "Australia's Remarkable Trees".

Please get a copy of the calendar from the website or at meeting

Facebook Fans

If you use Facebook you may want to keep up with information via the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden Group.

Type Melton Botanic Garden into the Facebook search box and you should be able to find the group.

Botanicgardenville is coming soon to rival Farmville and Fishville etc.

FMBG Corporate Members 2009 / 2010

Melton Home Timber and Hardware

45 Reserve Road, Melton, VIC 3337
Ph: (03) 9743 5033
Manager: Ken Morton

Melton Produce

38-42 Brooklyn Road, Melton South, Vic. 3338
Ph: (03) 9743 5201
Manager: Peter Earl

Satellite City Furniture

358 High Street Melton, VIC, 3337
Ph: 03 9743 4749 or 9743 6205

SOV Consulting

Melton VIC 3337
Ph: (03) 9746 7558
Manager: Con Nikakis
Email: nikakisc@gmail.com

Western Land Services

20 Collins Road, Melton, VIC 3337
p: (03) 9747 0855 f: (03) 9747 9593
<http://www.westernland.com.au>

Your Committee

President:	John Bentley (9743 3819)
Vice-President:	Allan Benson (9746 6641)
Treasurer:	Margaret Peters (5367 3328)
Secretary:	Janet Dyke (9743 2733)
Assistant Secretary:	Alan Partridge (9743 5761)
Executive members:	Jill Bentley (9743 3819)
	Dave Peters(5367 3328)
Safety Officer:	Dave Peters (5367 3328)



If you have stories or photographs from activities in the Melton Botanic Garden please send them to: editor@fmbg.org.au

Newsletter:

Editor: John Bentley (9743 3819)
Email: editor@fmbg.org.au

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